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ABSTRACT

The career paths and backgrounds of 30 upper-level women administrators in 25 North Carolina four-year public and private institutions were evaluated. These women occupied the highest or next-highest positions within a given category and held a doctorate or equivalent. Structured interviews covered background and education; work history; and the influence of family, friends, and mentors. Their views of college administration, the work climate, and the potential for women in the field were also surveyed. These administrators possessed a wide range of engaging personal qualities and they became expert at career strategies that utilized experience and made the most of talents. They accepted responsibility and valued work, which resulted in sustained performance and a record of achievement. Early role models appeared to be important, as were family attitudes, expectations, support, and trust. It appears that administrative leadership positions can be attained through pathways not totally within academe, although appropriate academic credentials are a requirement. What is needed most is adaptability and a wide range of qualities and skills. Finally, attainment of these high-level careers may have been more the outcome of personal goals than of career planning and precise patterns of preparation. An interview guide is appended. (SW)

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WOMEN AS ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: QUALITATIVE DATA FOR VALUE QUESTIONS

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WOMEN AS ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: QUALITATIVE DATA FOR VALUE QUESTIONS

The Problem

Despite equal opportunity legislation, affirmative action, and a social climate increasingly supportive of women's professional aspirations, the position of women in academe appears to have changed very little over the past several decades. In particular, their progress into upper-level administrative roles has been especially slow. It has been observed, in fact, that in this "rarefied atmosphere," women are almost entirely absent. Ninety-five percent of college students attend institutions where men serve in all three of the top administrative roles--as presidents, as chief academic officers, as deans.[1]

While this may be partially explained by the fact that women as a group earn fewer doctorates than men, there appear to be more fundamental barriers as well. From one perspective, as newcomers to the academic profession, women might be expected to be found on the lower rungs of the career ladder, and their small numbers at the top seen as representative of the current pool of those with appropriate training and experience. Yet, from another perspective, women are not really "newcomers" at all, having long made important contributions to academe as both faculty and administrators. What appears to be the case is that individual women have indeed achieved in every aspect of higher education, but that progress for women as a group has been slow.

Foundations in the Literature

This observation points to the existence of fundamental questions about women's primary roles in society and the nature of their career aspirations. But it also suggests that those aspirations may have been inhibited in ways that men's have not. The literature on women and achievement explores the

concept of both internal and external barriers to be overcome by those who make the choice for careers--their own confusion about their role in society as well as the limitations of stereotypic roles that society may try to impose.

The literature also suggests that higher education is a particularly troublesome arena for professional women. Colleges and universities, like most institutions, were established by men. Hence, they tend to have structures and processes that reflect male values and lifestyles and thereby pose problems for females. In addition, academic institutions, bound as they are to tradition, and somewhat isolated from the demands of the outside world, are more resistant to change than other kinds of organizations. The point is that while legislation may have brought an end to overt discrimination, attitudes and patterns remain which continue to work to the disadvantage of ambitious women. In a sense, they are still "outsiders" in a system where the route to the top is clear only to those who are "insiders."[2]

Additional investigation of women as managers in other settings underscores, with the sparcity of references, their relative absence in such roles. And examination of the current literature on careers and career development provides few insights for the questions addressed by this study since most of the theory that has emerged is based on the experiences of men and, therefore, has little descriptive or explanatory power when applied to those whose motivations and employment patterns are often different.

The conclusion one draws from all of this is that the position of women in professional life, and especially in academe, reflects a society in which women remain relatively subordinate, a status that, in turn, is both cause and effect. The ultimate result is the statistical reality with which we are so familiar. That in itself makes the problem even more unyielding since so few women at the top sets subtle limitations on other's perceptions of what is possible and thus, worth striving for.

Methodology

It is this cycle in particular that has suggested the importance of a study which emphasizes success rather than failure; what has facilitated rather than what has blocked; how ambition has been fulfilled rather than how it may have been thwarted. For while research has identified barriers that continue to exist, it is also apparent that there are those women today, as in the past, who continue to overcome them. Uncommon as these women are, their career paths can inspire and instruct as to how both personal initiatives, and the initiatives of others, have been used to develop career options. And whatever common themes there are, these may have implications for the preparation of similarly talented women on the way up.

This study, then, has looked beyond barriers to achievement. The source of data was a purposive sample of 30 upper-level women administrators in 25 North Carolina four-year institutions. The subjects were selected from a state-wide inventory conducted under the auspices of the American Council on Education's National Identification Program. A variety of positions was represented, with half the group employed by private colleges and half by the public university system. "Upper-level administrators" were defined as those at the highest or next-highest positions within a given category, whose credentials included the doctorate or equivalent, and who reported to the highest or next-highest management level.

The investigator personally conducted a two-hour structured interview with each subject, on her campus, covering background and education; the influence of family, friends, and mentors; and work history. Participants were also asked for their perceptions of administration in higher education, the climate in which they work, the qualities, abilities, and skills they consider most valuable, and the potential for women in the field, as well as in their particular institutions.

The study, then, was primarily exploratory and descriptive, intended to provide a detailed account of a well-defined sample. At the close of the interview, each subject provided a curriculum vita along with other relevant materials of her own choosing such as institutional catalogs, program brochures, and job descriptions. All 30 sessions were taped to allow for later review and analysis.

The very nature of the problem confronted by this investigation--the relative lack of women as upper-level administrators in higher education institutions--suggested not only the important questions to be answered but the appropriate methodology for doing so. Structured interviews were clearly the best way to make full use of a small sample, eliciting a broad range of descriptive data from each subject yet, in standardized categories so that comparisons might be drawn. At the same time, a non-scheduled format permitted variations in sequence and wording within those categories in order to be responsive to different situations and the participants' own initiatives. The interview technique then, as used in this study, provided the flexibility and nuance necessary to capture both facts and feelings; both the record of achievement and the sense of personal identity shared by the respondents.

In addition, the decision to use successful women shaped the study in several ways. First, success was seen as more instructive than failure because strategies evolve from it. By using women acknowledged to be successful, the study had the advantage of a special sensitivity to critical decisions and behaviors, and the opportunity to describe them.

Success was also viewed as important to objectivity. Since failure generally lowers self-esteem, fixing blame and minimizing one's own responsibility for it are necessary for restoring the conficence needed for new efforts. Success, on the other hand, fosters openness and even generosity. Thus, the subjects were comfortable in describing their personal contributions and in recognizing the contributions of others.

Finally, in dealing with successful careers, the study had a primarily positive outlook. It took the position that although there are "accidents," both fortunate and unfortunate, that affect career paths, it would appear that the participants used such circumstances in purposeful ways. Thus, initiative was described rather than inaction, and possibilities rather than difficulties. It may be that the positive perspective did not illuminate problems as well as its opposite might have done, but it seemed the more productive approach for suggesting solutions.

There were a number of planned factors for facilitating communication between the investigator and the subjects but, as is often the case in qualitative research, unplanned factors emerged which were also utilized. The planned factors included such things as a preliminary letter, which was intended to provide enough information about the nature of the investigation and its purpose to produce interested and willing subjects. In addition, the characteristics of the investigator were carefully considered in the initial development of the study--such overt factors as age, sex, and social status as well as training and experience in higher education or, what has been referred to as, the special knowledge that enables one to take on the role of an insider.[3] Thus the interviewer had the advantage of being someone with whom the respondents could feel comfortable and treat as a colleague.

The unplanned factors related to the personalities and special skills of members of the sample. While it was obvious that this would be a group of talented women, the particular contribution of those talents to good communication had not been fully anticipated: the fact that all were such open and forthright people; that all had keen analytical skills which they were able to apply to themselves and their experiences; that all were so practiced in presentation and expert in conversation and discussion. All of these factors, then, contributed to the range of information gathered and to its quality as well.

In retrospect, one other significant factor emerged. It has been said by many in leadership roles that "it is lonesome at the top." Given the nature of the problem that this inquiry addresses, that would seem to be especially true for women in such roles, and for the particular women in this study. Thus, the arrival of an "interested observer," to talk with them about their careers in higher education administration, appears to have been viewed as a rare opportunity, a welcome chance to share thoughts, concerns, and insights about their lives and to assess themselves and their work.

The qualitative method contributed to the study in one other very important way. While the need for valid information in any research effort is unquestioned, it should be noted that the findings were based on individual perceptions as much as fact. This is not to suggest that perceptions and fact never conform--but only that perceptions have a fundamental quality that tends to make them, more often than fact, the basis for personal decisions and life choices. Thus, perceptions can be more illuminating than the facts in a given set of circumstances. For the women in this study, what they believed to be true about persons and events they encountered is what these were to them in their lives and careers. Thus, perceptions were valid information for them, and they were viewed as valid information for the study as well.

In addition to this assumption, several measures of validity[4] were in fact applied to the study which are especially appropriate to qualitative data:

- Selection validity relates to situations where the information sought is not generally known to most people but is known by a particular group. Thus, the use of a purposive sample was a way to assure valid information about women administrators in higher education.
- Concurrence validity assumes correlation of information with some other indicator. Data gathered in interviews were reviewed with each

participant's vita as well as other documents submitted relating to her particular institution.

. Construct validity refers to the internal logic of a series of statements and their relationship with one another. Thus, the analysis was sensitive to the consistency of responses and to the sequence of events reported and themes developed in the interviews.

Ultimately, however, the most persuasive evidence of validity was found in the aggregation of these actual data. The findings illustrated quite clearly that the 30 interviews provided diversity but not contradiction. In fact, the same issues were raised again and again, and there were many shared perceptions grounded in varied experience.

FINDINGS

The major contribution of an exploratory and descriptive study is more in the wealth of detail it generates than in a set of specific conclusions. There were, after all, no hypotheses to prove or theoretical formulations to uphold. Yet interviews with these uncommon women produced many common themes. And in essence, these suggested the bases of their particular career achievement in higher education. Four areas were especially notable:

Personal Qualities: Although their personal and leadership styles were varied, without exception, the subjects possessed a wide range of engaging personal qualities--from warmth and wit, to sensitivity and patience, to discipline and balance. While many of these characteristics had emerged early in their formative years, the participants apparently also recognized their value and continued to develop and refine them. Ultimately, such qualities were viewed as an important element in their success as administrators.

Career Skills: Whether they were aware of it or not, all of the subjects had found ways to further their own goals and enhance their careers. Thus, they prepared themselves appropriately, they created their own support systems,

they learned how to position themselves for opportunity, and how to interpret and connect their experiences, even when non-academic, with future possibilities. In other words, they became expert at career strategies which they used to bridge the gap between their own initiatives and motivations, and the initiatives and opportunities made available to them by others.

Work as a Value: Work was a value for all of these women and, for most, was essentially continuous throughout their adult lives. While there were probably some personal and family costs involved, their long work history nevertheless placed them in a better position to compete with men for career opportunities. Although their paths may have been more varied than those of their male colleagues, working, and the expectation to do so, fostered a very similar sense of confidence and competence, as well as professional attitudes that made them equally good candidates who could not be overlooked.

Accepting Responsibility: One of the clearest patterns emerging from the study was the responsiveness of the participants to accepting responsibility--their willingness to assist in tasks, to be available for service, to be involved in problem-solving, to use themselves and their talents when asked to do so. Although this too was a pattern that emerged early, it was one that they adhered to into adult life. Ultimately, as their own goals became more clear, they were able to shape the opportunities that were offered to fit their own purposes. But because of this habit of response, they also appeared to be persons for whom such opportunities were never lacking.

Important as these four broad conclusions are, however, as already suggested, a field study may be at its best when it stays close to the raw data from which such findings are drawn. While some data reduction is a necessary part of any qualitative analysis plan, to generalize too much is to risk the very reality and sense of identity that make this research methodology so meaningful. It

was the participants' actual accounts of their lives and careers, then, that were central to this effort, each a model of achievement instructive to other aspiring women.

As already indicated, structured interviews were used and provided some control over the potential array of data. There were seven areas of questioning within which the same information was elicited from each subject. Thus, each of these domains ultimately could be reviewed across all 30 cases to describe facts and feelings, note highlights, draw comparisons, and identify major themes and variations. While the original study provided a wide range of information, a composite, or profile of the woman administrator in higher education, was also developed as a final summary of findings. The inclusion of that profile here seems especially appropriate since it captures, in relatively brief form, important background and personal factors of the participants as well as the nature of their life experiences and career-building.

A Profile of the Woman Administrator

The woman administrator in this study held an upper-level administrative post at a North Carolina four-year public or private college or university. She was most often about 50 years of age and was currently married or had been at some point earlier in her life. As for children, she was almost as likely not to have them as to have them, but if she did, her family was relatively small--two or three.

This woman also held the doctorate, usually the Ph.D. in some aspect of education. Her undergraduate study, however, was clearly oriented to the humanities. As a member of this sample, she grew up in a rural or small-town community in the South, and was more often white than a member of a minority group.

Family Background

This woman had the benefit in her early life of a stable, emotionally secure home enviromnent with responsible, hardworking parents who provided a

sense of family integrity and identity. Most of her activities were family-and school-centered and she appeared to fulfill her parents' high expectations for good moral character, personal discipline, and school achievement. Her mother, in particular, was a model of energy and community involvement and was often employed outside the home, at least part-time. She was a child of the Depression yet never felt really deprived. There were usually brothers and sisters and, together, they shared good times as well as family responsibility and trust. While the family was close, this woman also had much time alone to dream, to discover her talents, and to be a child, unhurried into adulthood.

Early Years

The early school years were marked by high scholastic achievement as well as the development of broad interests. She involved herself in all kinds of school activities and sports, and was respected by both teachers and peers for her intellectual competence. At the same time, she experienced some lack of confidence in social situations, and especially with boys. In her family, she maintained respectful attitudes toward her parents and their wishes and had equally significant relationships with both mother and father. In addition, she had many other role models, most often teachers or members of her extended family.

If she was black, she became conscious of social inequities about this time. Yet ironically, she felt that her separate schooling insulated her from feelings of inferiority or inequality and, in addition, developed a strong identity which not only helped her to deal with racial discrimination, but with sex discrimination as well.

As she matured, our woman administrator developed outstanding communication skills, particularly in speaking. This competence, along with her other emerging talents, often resulted in special responsibilities being offered which she readily accepted. She began to think about college quite early, always

with the expectation that she would attend. For whatever reasons, even though her family was lower-middle income and hard-pressed to make ends meet, her parents did not discourage her in that aspiration, or in any other.

College and Graduate School

This woman did in fact go to college, however, with scholarship assistance and a job to help pay expenses. Her college, like her home, was typically in the South and was a good fit for her intellectual and social needs. There she experienced her first intense academic challenges as she met other students of similar abilities. She also found the college years a period of great social stimulation--it was her first time away from home and she made the most of it! Extracurricular activities provided significant leadership experience and she continued her pattern of taking on responsibility as well as seeking it. Graduate school was considered later, after she had worked for some time and her career directions were more apparent. Thus, although her undergraduate experience was continuous, graduate education, and especially her doctoral work, did not come for another eight to ten years.

It should be noted that this pattern was quite different for women who were younger than the profile average. Graduate school was pursued much sooner and the doctorate completed within eight to ten years after college.

While the most specific impact of college and graduate study on her career was credentialing not subject matter, our administrator found the total experience stimulating and exciting. That may bear some relation to her return to the higher education setting for professional work. "I loved learning" she said, "and I loved my university. I always felt that it was my kind of place."

Work History and Career Development

This woman generally married soon after college and began what was essentially a continuous work life to the present day. Working--to have a job and a role--was both an expectation and a value. Even the birth of her children

did not disrupt this overall pattern. Her husband, while not always at her same educational level, was at least a college graduate and had a job that was "professional" in nature, often in another higher education institution or the public schools. Thus, he understood the demands of her work and was supportive of her personal goals as well as of her career.

At the same time, balancing marriage, family, and career was acknowledged as a difficult and challenging task. Sometimes there were nearby family members who assisted when children were young. More often, paid help was a necessity. In general, her view was that it is the quality of time spent with family that matters, not the quantity. Still, she did not deny that there were costs involved such as time to oneself and personal serenity.

This woman's career path to administration most often began with school teaching, followed by some graduate work which then led to college-level teaching. Once in higher education, the doctorate was recognized as a necessity for advancement and thus, was undertaken. Her gradual move toward administration was fostered by administrative experience gained in her university or college through various kinds of assignments--committee work, special projects, proposal writing and development. She recognized these opportunities for institutional service as important vehicles for advancement and always made herself available.

There were especially significant mentors during this period of career building who were men, almost without exception, since there were so few women in leadership roles in academe. They advised and encouraged her and, more importantly, often made special opportunities available. On the other hand, she began to enhance her own awareness of career possibilities and then developed strategies for making her qualifications known, for positioning herself and, of course, for being ready when opportunities came.

Perceptions of the Field of Administration in Academe

Once she moved into administration, this woman found the work highly satisfying and worthy of her best efforts as a professional. In reviewing the events leading to her current upper-level role, she could recall no insurmountable barriers to advancement although there were indeed various incidents she considered irritations, slights, or oversights rather than discrimination, since they did not appear to her to be intentional. Such incidents were nonetheless painful. In general, she had learned that the best way to deal with such occurrences was to bring them out into the open and let her feelings be known. Thus, she was able to minimize their effects and reduce their frequency.

In assessing administration as a field, she saw it as requiring a broad combination of qualities, abilities, and skills. Furthermore, she saw herself as a person possessing such breadth, a generalist, moreso than the men she worked with. Although she had occasional personality clashes, sometimes over this differing perspective, she felt comfortable in her work and was recognized by her peers as competent and able. She observed that there is always uncertainty, especially in the most traditional realms, about people who are "different." "Ultimately, the problem is not the differences," she said, "it's getting people to accept them."

Perceptions of Academic Institutions

The predominately male atmosphere was the most obvious aspect of this woman's working environment. While she often felt lonely and somewhat isolated, she also felt that she had adequate access to her male superiors and relatively good working relationships with her male colleagues. Having been in her present institution for about 11 years, and in her current role for about five, she was well aware of the independent and undefined nature of higher education administration and of the need to understand its informal systems of management. She

was also aware of the importance of using professional networks as well as the need for women to develop additional support systems of their own. In general her approach to leadership was not too different in style from that of her male colleagues. Although she understood the requirements of management very well, like them, she had discovered that personnel problems are the most troublesome; occasionally she encountered difficulties in supervising younger male subordinates. Still, she was not overwhelmed by such problems. Her approach was to be as sensitive and nonthreatening as possible but not at the expense of the professional goals she had set for herself.

Perceptions of Self and Current Role

Despite this woman's obvious achievements, she sometimes had misgivings about her competence and hence a tendency to "overperform" and "under-risk." A particular concern was the thought of getting "in over her head," that is, obtaining a job for which she felt inadequate. Even so, she forthrightly rejected the notion of targeted training in administration for women, feeling that since it had never been suggested for men in higher education moving into administration, there was no reason to suggest it for women. However, that did not mean that some training was not useful, and indeed she identified particular needs in the areas of budgeting, finance, and computer operations.

In sum, this woman exhibited certain important general characteristics: she appeared to be an open and collaborative leader with an appreciation of the importance of teamwork. She was highly professional--loyal to her institution and devoted to her work. She seemed to understand the requirements of management. She demonstrated perspective about her situation and had a good sense of humor that helped her to deal with ambiguities and accept the transient nature of the administrative role in higher education.

As for her contribution to furthering the aspirations of other women, she was supportive and concerned, but not an activist in her approach. Essentially,

her view was that in being uncommon she had a special opportunity to be a visible role model. Hence, her greatest responsibility to other women, as well as to herself, was to do her work exceedingly well and to be recognized as a highly-competent professional in her chosen field. That, she firmly believed, would be the real feminist victory.

Implications

As the foregoing summary makes clear, this study was especially instructive about the importance of early role models as well as family attitudes, expectations, support, and trust. It has demonstrated that positions of administrative leadership in higher education can be attained via pathways not totally within academe, although appropriate academic credentials are a requirement. It has illustrated that while administrative experience is useful, what is needed most is adaptability and a wide range of qualities and skills. And it has suggested that these high-level careers were more the outcome of personal goals than they were of career planning and precise patterns of preparation.

From all of this, certain commonalities are evident which have already been identified as bases for this particular group's career attainments:

- personal qualities which established goals and engaged people;
- career skills which utilized experience and made the most of talents;
- work as a value which resulted in sustained performance and a record of achievement; and
- accepting responsibility which developed commitment and brought opportunities.

It would appear that because these subjects were part of an era when women were less able to think in career terms, they turned their energies instead to the development of personal competencies shaped not by vocational requirements but by their own visions of success. Today, however, vast changes

in society have made the case quite different. Because professional careers are a reality for many more women, there is a tendency toward an earlier focus on career goals and more deliberate career planning. The outcomes of this are largely positive, but there are also some negative aspects. Such specialization may limit the options. And it fosters the expectation that the fulfillment of prerequisites somehow guarantees success.

Yet, there are no guarantees of success, which indicates that some caution may be in order for this approach. This study, in fact, provides solid support for a broader perspective. Thus, the implication is not to do away with appropriate career preparation but, to incorporate in that process, more understanding of career development over a lifetime--of the need to be attentive to both personal and environmental factors and to strategies which can bring about their interaction. High-level success requires creative combinations.

Perhaps the most effective career preparation, then, is analogous to an athlete's training: superb personal conditioning and knowledge of the game which, together, produce intuitive awareness of the best moves, and when and how to make them. For careers are much like athletic contests: the motivation to succeed is important but so is the opportunity to do it. Ultimately, the athlete's skill comes not only in recognizing the moments of advantage, but in helping to bring them about.

The 30 women in this study have demonstrated this same skill in their lives and work. Their careers, too, have been a balance of personal and situational factors. And their success suggests that determination invited possibility, motivation planned for opportunity, and thoughtful life choices set the stage for the chances that life also made available.

* * *

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4. Ibid

Figures

Interview Guide

Personal Data Sheet

Figure 1

ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES REPRESENTED BY THE SAMPLE

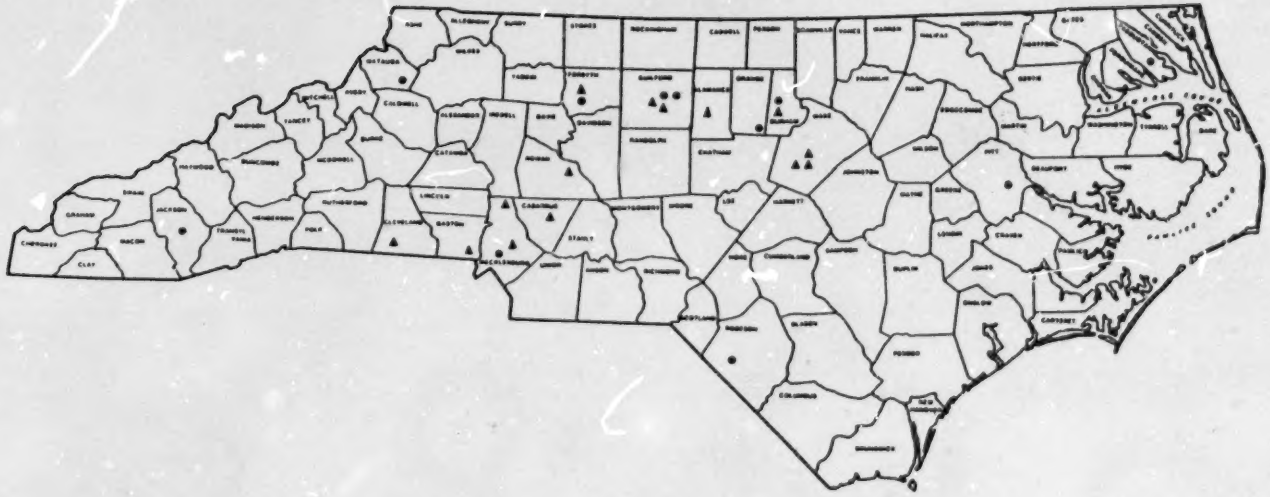
Administrative Roles	Subjects Public	Private
Chief Executive Officers		
Highest Level (single institution)	-	1
Next-highest (within a system)	-	-
Academic Officers		
Highest Level	-	4
Next-highest	3	-
Development Officers		
Highest Level	-	1
Next-highest	1	-
Student Life Officers		
Highest Level	1	1
Next-highest	-	2
Admissions/Records Officers		
Highest Level	1	-
Next-highest	-	-
Community/Public Services Officers		
Highest Level	-	1
Next-highest	-	-
Institutional Research/Planning Officers		
Highest Level	-	1
Next-highest	-	-
Health Affairs Officers		
Highest Level	-	-
Next-highest	1	1
Deans of Schools		
Highest Level	6	2
Next-highest	2	1
	15	15

Highest Level includes Deans, Vice Presidents, Vice Chancellors, Directors
Next-highest includes Assistant Vice Presidents, Assistant Vice Chancellors, Associate Deans

Figure 2

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF INSTITUTIONS
REPRESENTED BY THE SAMPLE

North Carolina



● Public Four-Year Institutions (11 of 16)

▲ Private Four-Year Institutions (14 of 30)

Figure 3

CONTINUITY/DISCONTINUITY OF EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION:
AVERAGE YEARS ELAPSED BETWEEN UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE DEGREES
FOR TWO AGE GROUPS, UNDER 45 (N = 10) AND OVER 45 (N = 20)

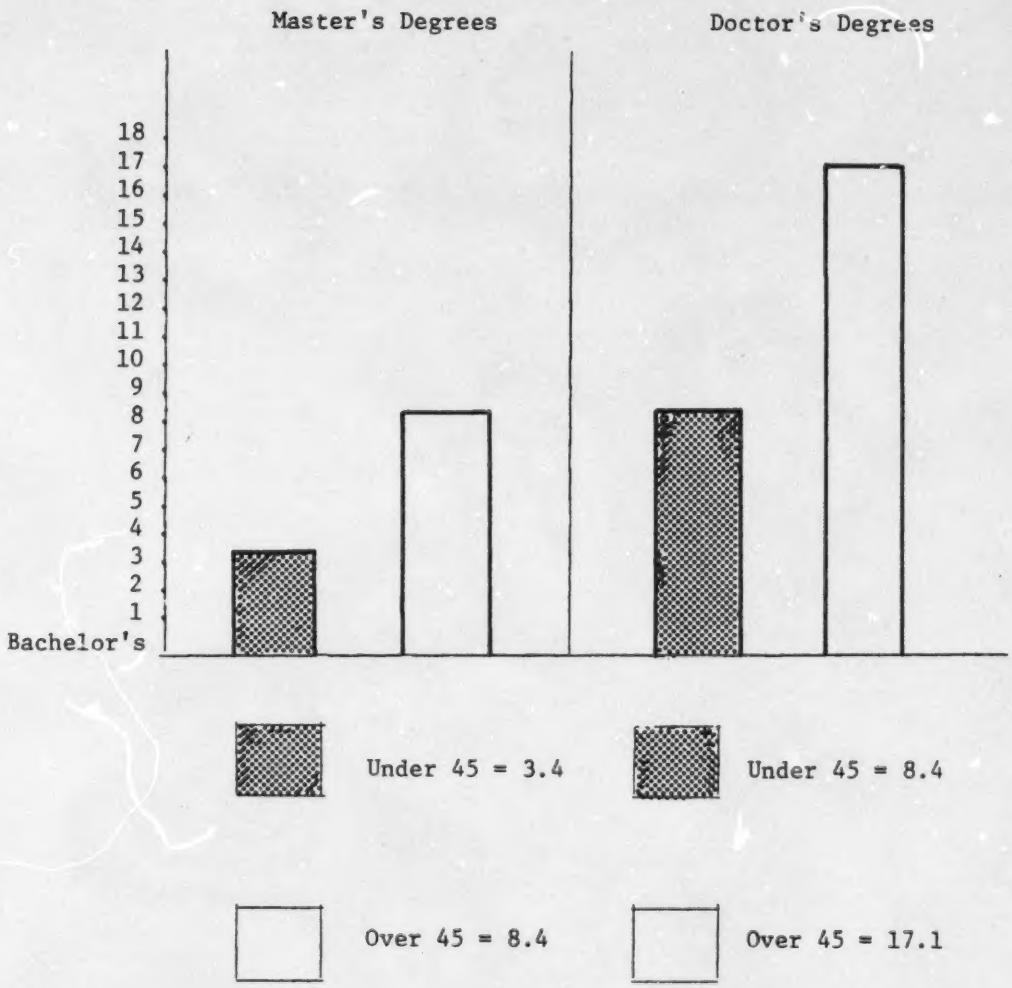
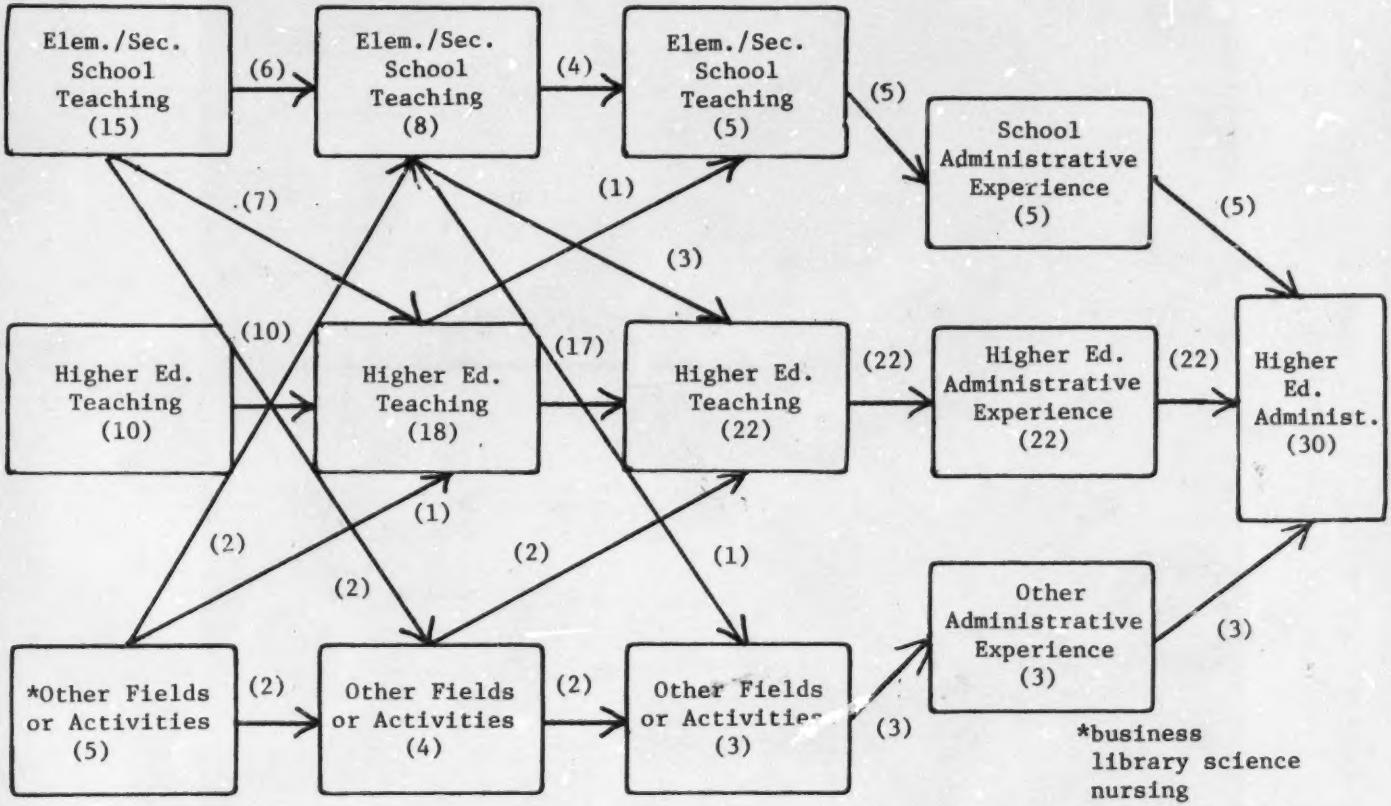


Figure 4

WORK HISTORY OF THE SAMPLE: PATHS TO ADMINISTRATION



CAREER PATHS OF WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS:

PERCEPTIONS OF MOTIVATION AND OPPORTUNITY

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Respondent:

Title:

Institution:

Interview Site:

Date:

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INTRODUCTION

> Our success depended not only on our own determination but on the openmindedness of the institutions in which we worked.
>
> Millicent C. McIntosh

Notes for the Interviewer's Explanatory Remarks

Provide a brief explanation of the study suggesting these two dimensions of a successful career and indicate that I will be seeking their perceptions about both--the personal qualities they have contributed and the opportunities that have been made available to them.

> The most important single observation about women in the academic world is that their numbers decrease dramatically as the importance of the posts increases.
>
> Patricia A. Graham

The significance of the study centers around this fact. Yet, its approach is to consider that success will be far more instructive than failure. Hence this series of indepth interviews with women who are already "there." We know very little about them and we want to find out more--how they arrived; how they handle their jobs; what they think about higher education administration and their roles in it; and what the future may hold.

Opening Overview Question

Can you identify several factors from your own experience as especially important in helping you to reach your current position and perform well in it? If you could go back and do something differently, what would you do?

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Areas and Issues

place of birth/growing up?
parents' occupations/educational level?
family life/siblings?
early interests/aspirations?

Possible Probes

a happy childhood/family life?

EARLY YEARS

Areas and Issues

schooling through high school?
emerging interests and abilities?
friends and activities outside the home?
intellectual challenges?
sexual identity/adolescence?
early mentors/role models?

Possible Probes

parental expectations and aspirations?
feelings about the feminine role?
did parents allow independence?

COLLEGE YEARS AND GRADUATE SCHOOL

Areas and Issues

the college decision--when? where? why?
undergraduate goals/major field?
intellectual challenges?
identity and diffusion?
peers and mentors?
early work experiences?
the graduate school decision--when? where? why?
development of special field/research interest?
colleagues/mentors?

Possible Probes

most important impact of college on life?
perceptions of self at this time/self-concept?

WORK EXPERIENCE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Areas and Issues

work experience during/after graduate school?
development of competence--what is it?
career goals and strategies?
professional employment--what? where?
present position--how was it attained? recruited? own initiative? grew into it?
personal life--marriage? children? effects?
management of family and career/husband's role?

Possible Probes

did you have previous experience in administration? what? where?
conflict between family and career?

PERCEPTIONS OF THE FIELD OF ADMINISTRATION IN ACADEME

Areas and Issues

aspirations to be an administrator?
level of satisfaction/productivity/creativity?
future intentions?
other alternatives--been/being considered?
opportunities for personal growth?
qualities a professional in this field should have?
skills required?
distinction between qualities and skills?

Possible Probes

ever discouraged from academic or administrative goals because of being a woman?

PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

Areas and Issues

current institutional culture/atmosphere?
formal and informal systems/structures/behaviors?
chain of command?
level of independence/trust?
level of collegiality/support?
mentors--who?
rewards--what?
barriers to opportunity--structural? attitudinal? traditional?
orientation of institution--open? closed? inbetween?

Possible Probes

environment of your institution--appropriate conditions for mobility and full productivity?
suggestions for improvement?

PERCEPTIONS OF SELF AND CURRENT ROLE

Areas and Issues

level of motivation/achievement?
most useful skills--where learned?
most useful experiences?
success--balance of timing and talents? use of career strategies?
sense of power/authority--recognized by peers?
leadership style--instrumental/expressive (task/maintenance)?
professional goals and personal goals--same? different? in harmony?
conflicting?

Possible Probes

current role--is it a good fit?
training for administration in higher education--where? when?
pools for academic administrative talent--only in academia?
suggestions for new areas of talent search?
suggestions for women on the way up?

INDIVIDUAL DEMOGRAPHIC AND PERSONAL DATA SHEET

Respondent:

Age Range: under 35 35 to 45 45 to 55 over 55

Place of Birth Growing Up: big city small city big town small town rural

Mother's Education:

Mother's Occupation:

Father's Education:

Father's Occupation:

Siblings: brothers sisters

Undergraduate Institution(s):

Undergraduate Major: Degree: Year:

Graduate Institution(s):

Graduate Program: Degree: Year:

Years in Current Job: Years in Current Institution:

Marital Status: married single widowed divorced children

Husband's Education:

Husband's Occupation: